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XXII.—*Notes on two Journeys from Baghdád to the Ruins of Al Hadhr, in Mesopotamia, in 1836 and 1837.* By JOHN Ross, Esq., Surgeon to the British Residency at Baghdád.

AFTER numerous failures for nearly two years, in endeavouring to get Bedwins to escort me to the ruins of Al Hadhr, I have at length succeeded in persuading Šalāh-el-Mezeīnī, a well-known Ajeílī, to make the attempt. The ruins themselves and the country round them are looked upon by the Arabs with superstitious awe, as the haunts of evil spirits; moreover, the roads to them are always infested by plundering parties of the Šammār and Aneīzah, passing to and from forays; so Šalāh determined to proceed with as few attendants and as little display as possible. I take two servants, and Šalāh two Bedwins: we are all to ride horses except one, who rides the dhulúl or racing camel, carrying our small store of provisions.

May 7, 1836.—Our preparations being completed at 6h. 35m. A.M., we left western Baghdád by the Kádhimeīn gate. At 7h. 25m. entered, and in 10 min. had passed through, the village of Kádhimeīn, the bearing of which from the gate is about N.W.  $\frac{1}{2}$  N., but the road makes a considerable bend to get round a turn of the river. From Kádhimeīn we kept a winding course, in a general direction N.W. At 8h. we had Kھیát-el-Súķ, or Ishákí, close on our left: it is an aqueduct of great antiquity, said to leave the Tigris near Tekrít: I kept along in its bed, and could distinctly trace every branch given off by it. At 8h. 30m. came upon a large pool of water in its bed, from which were dug up, only last year, the remains of an ancient bridge, to build a house in Baghdád: the bridge was built of bricks, with cuneiform inscriptions, exactly similar to those of Babylon, and cemented with bitumen. From this point 'Aker Kúf bears S.W. by W. At 9h. 5m. the Ishákí makes a slight turn to the left, and here the plain is covered with small mounds, broken bricks, and pottery. At 10h. 45m. came to the Ishákí again, where it takes a similar turn and has the same indications; Kádhimeīn bearing S.S.E., 'Aker Kúf S.S.W., a mound called Tel Kheir N.  $\frac{1}{2}$  E. Our course now nearly N.N.W. At 11h. 10m. passed a tel close on our right, and at 12h. 20m. P.M. came to another larger, from which Khán Suweīdiyāh bore N.E.  $\frac{1}{2}$  E. We now kept a winding course between N.N.E. and N. At 1h. a small tel close on our right. Crossed three ancient canals in succession; and at 3h. 30m. halted at a sheet of water called Tarmíyāh, of several miles in extent, occupying part of the Shaṭ Aūdhá, or ancient bed of the Tigris, winding like that river, and of nearly the same breadth: the water is good and full of fish. At 3h. 40m. we again went on, the track winding between N. and N.W.

At 4h. 20m. we were crossing a plain covered with small tels, bricks, pottery, and intersected by dry canals. At 5h. got to the tomb of Sayyed Ibráhím on the top of an ancient tel. Sumeichah or Dijeil,\* bearing N.  $\frac{1}{2}$  W., Sheikh Jemil E.  $\frac{3}{4}$  N.; the ruins of 'Aḵbará and Wánah are seen extending N. and S. of Sheikh Jemil, but I am unable to make out their limits distinctly. We kept straight on for Sumeichah, while Ṣaláh, with a vast deal of gravity, let us all know the parts we were severally and jointly to act during the rest of the journey. I was to be a Turk going from 'Alí Páshá to Reshíd Páshá, and the Páshá of Móṣul, and to be styled the Aghá; my servant, having the most untravelling name of Nicholas, was henceforward to be called Ibráhím; the rest would pass muster, Ṣaláh being guide and protector of the party. At 5h. 15m. crossed a large branch from the old Dijeil canal, now dry. At 6h. 10m. we had a huge mass of the ancient Dijeil,  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a mile on our right; and  $\frac{1}{2}$  an hour after we entered Sumeichah, where we were instantly recognised and hospitably taken to the house of Jóhar Aghá, an Abyssinian, formerly belonging to Dáúd Páshá. I had frequently spoken to him at Baghdád about going to Al Ḥadhr, so he at once guessed our intentions, and all Ṣaláh's machinations fell to the ground: he says our journey must fail, as the season is too late by a month, the waters of the Tharthar are salt, and the Arabs constantly crossing the country we intend going over. He seriously advised, and even entreated, us to give up all idea of going, and retrace our steps; but, like most good advice, his was thrown away.

Sumeichah is still a very considerable village, surrounded with gardens of dates, oranges, apples, pears, vines, &c. &c.; the Dijeil canal runs through it, and the adjacent country is well cultivated. In the time of Dáúd Páshá, before the great plague, it had four times the present population.

8th.—One of the Arabs, a young lad, and also his horse, are knocked up by yesterday's march and by Jóhar Aghá's account of the country, so I resolve to leave them here.

At 6h. 30m. A.M. started in a N.W. by N. direction, over hillocks and old canals; 7h. 25m. passed a saint's tomb, and at 7m. 30m. the ruined village of Wazan, leaving another ruined village called Bábilín close on our right. These two villages are said to have been, from time immemorial, inhabited by the descendants of the ancient people of Babylon after the final destruction of that city, and they were only a few years ago deserted by their inhabitants for Ḥillah and Kerbelá. It is as well here to mention that I have before seen the people in question during my visits to Ḥillah; they are called Bábilí, are Mohammedans, but are looked down upon by the Arabs; they intermarry with no

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\* More correctly Dujeil, the little Tigris.—F. S.

other people, and earn their living entirely by digging up bricks for building from the ruins of Babylon.

At 8h. 5m. we passed the tomb of an Imám, with a couple of date-trees near it. The country is now becoming very beautiful and green, being well watered by cuts from the Dijeil. The Felláhs live in tents, and are now cutting the corn; in winter they all retire to the villages. At 8h. 40m. came upon the high bank of the ancient Dijeil on our right: the modern Dijeil flows in the centre of the old bed, taking up but a very small portion of it. On the opposite side is a square solid building of sun-dried bricks, apparently 20 or 30 yards in diameter. From the bank at this place Sumeichah bears S.E. by S.; Beled N., and appears to be not much less than Sumeichah; its gardens seem even more extensive. The ancient Dijeil has here two beds: we kept along one of them N.N.W. to N.W., the country now getting stony, or rather pebbly. At 9h. 10m. passed the ruined village of Hamirát: the ruins are on both sides of the canal, which has a broken bridge over it. A little way to our left is a clump of curious trees called *Shejerat-el-'Asl*, or honey-trees: the Arabs say that they bear large yellow flowers, which contain a portion of sweet viscid matter like honey, and that they are the only ones of the kind known. We now kept along the modern canal, here about 20 feet broad: the banks are covered with small poplars and wild oats. At 10h. we got to the bridge of Ḥarbah, a beautiful specimen of the architecture of the khaliphs. It crosses the ancient Dijeil, and consists of four large arches, with a smaller one between every two,—in all seven: it is built of very fine reddish-yellow bricks, and has on each side for its whole length a large and very perfect single line of Cufic legend in high relief. Its length is 52 long paces, breadth  $8\frac{1}{2}$ , with an expansion to 22 paces at each end. The parapet walls are so high, that a man on horseback cannot see over them. The ruins of Ḥarbah, with the lofty broken shaft of a minaret, are close on the eastern side of the canal. The stream of the modern Dijeil only takes up one of the arches.\*

At 10h. 30m. A.M. left this fine ruin, keeping about W. by N. At 11h. 10m. came upon a very large ancient canal, running N.W.  $\frac{1}{2}$  W., giving off many branches: from the point at which we crossed, Khán Mizrákjí, on the eastern bank of the Tigris, bore N.  $\frac{1}{2}$  W. At 11h. 25m. saw a saint's tomb at a distance to the S.: we now kept nearly N.W. At 12h. 10m. P.M. crossed a large ancient canal running N. and S.: we continued in the bed of another ancient canal (I think the *Iṣḥāqí*), much worn down. I now kept scouring along to the left and right, looking with much anxiety for the Median wall, and at 12h. 25m. had

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\* Mr. Ross's MS. is accompanied by a sketch of this bridge.

the great pleasure of standing on the top of it. It is called the Chalú, or Sídd Nimrúd, a solid straight single mound 25 long paces thick, with a bastion on its western face at every 55 paces, and on the same side it has a deep ditch 27 paces broad. The wall is here built of the small pebbles of the country, imbedded in cement of lime of great tenacity; it is from 35 to 40 feet in height, and runs in a straight line N.N.E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  E. and S.S.W.  $\frac{1}{4}$  W., in the latter direction as far as the eye can trace it. The Bedwins tell me it goes in the same straight line to two mounds called Ramelah, on the Euphrates, some hours above Felújah; that it is in places far inland built of brick, and in some parts worn down level with the desert. They say that it was built by Nimrúd (Nimrod) to keep off the people of Nínawah (Nineveh), with whom he had an implacable feud. At this place is an opening or gateway, and on the western side of the ditch a square enclosed by a thick rampart, the Málawíyah at Sámarrah bearing N.N.W.  $\frac{1}{2}$  W., Harbah S.E. by E. From this spot I rode along the top of it half a mile to the Dijeil, where every trace of it has been swept away by a háwí, or embayment of the Tigris; Khán Mizrákjí, a small tomb across the Dijeil, here bore N.E. From this point we kept on our journey N.W., the country getting gradually higher and undulating, composed of pebbles and limestone. The rise was so sudden that in an hour after we saw the Dijeil, nearly at the surface, we found it in a bed cut for it some 50 or 60 feet deep, through ground apparently as hard as iron. There are several old beds filled up, and the Arabs show the course of the Ishákí, but it was too confused to be traced without a minute examination. The present bed of the Dijeil was dug, I am told, only twenty or thirty years ago, by a certain Selím Beg; and I observed exposed in many parts of it sections of ancient brick walls. At 2h. 30m. got to the ruins of Istábolát: they are of considerable extent, showing broken houses built of both burnt and sun-dried bricks (the former cemented with lime) disposed in regular squares, with wide open streets crossing each other at right angles, the whole surrounded by a strong wall built of sun-dried bricks, with bastions and a fosse. Outside this appear several tepeh in confusion, probably a suburb. This is one of the most perfect and regular of the ancient ruins I have yet seen, and well worthy of a proper examination, which my present flying visit does not allow me to do. From the wall the mosque at Sámarrah bears N.W.  $\frac{1}{2}$  W.; Málawíyah, N.  $\frac{1}{2}$  W.; Gháim N.  $\frac{1}{4}$  E.

We went for some time longer over the high ground, and then descended to the river at Sherí'at-el-Ghazel, thence kept on in the háwí till 5h. P.M., when we halted close to the Tigris, opposite Sámarrah. We had just made ourselves comfortable, when

all at once a sudden and furious storm of rain and wind came on, completely deluging us.

9th.—Got up from out our bed of mud, and at 5h. A.M. started direct for 'A'shiḵ N.N.W.  $\frac{1}{2}$  W., and reached it in an hour and a half. It is a square open building (with a projection from the N.E. front), built of the finest bricks in the splendid style of the era of the khaliphs; each side has six pilasters on square bases still standing to a considerable height, but most of the intermediate walls have tumbled down, giving the whole at a distance the appearance of a group of pillars. It stands on the high land, having the Ishāḳī in the Wādī or valley of the Tigris close under it. From 'A'shiḵ we kept along a straight mound or rampart in the ḥawī, our course about N.W. I observed several other mounds. At 7h. were opposite to the ruins of Shinās (on the eastern side of the Tigris), a ruin of the Mohammedan ages. At 7h. 30m. I rode up the high bank to look at a ruin, which appeared from a short distance to be a pyramid: I found it a solid mass, a portion of the wall of a square enclosure, evidently of great antiquity. It is about 25 feet high, formed of materials exactly similar to the Chalú and Ghāim, with the exception of having at intervals of several feet layers of very large red bricks. The walls are still 2 or 3 feet high. It is called Ḥawēsilāt;\* 'A'shiḵ bearing S. by E., a mosque and minaret across the Tigris N.E. (seemingly a miniature copy of those at Sāmarrāh), called Minárat Ja'fer Abú Delif el Barmakí. We now kept on over the ḥawī, nearly N.N.W.: the Tigris here flows in a valley in many places 6, 8, and 10 miles broad, the projecting headlands forming embayments which are called ḥawís, and have a fine rich soil covered with grass and small tamarisks. The high land has now become rocky, apparently sandstone.

At 9h. 50m. reached Mehjar, a high mound of earth, with several small ones round about it, covered with broken bricks, pottery, and scorixæ, situated at the extremity of a projecting headland, close to the river and exactly opposite to the mouth of the Nahrawán. From the top 'A'shiḵ bore S. by E., Dúr N.N.E. On a fine flat under the ruins was fought one of the most bloody battles the Arabs ever fought against Turks in these countries, when 'Omar, Páshá of Baghdád, with the 'Azzá and Al-'Abāid Arabs, almost annihilated the great tribe of Majammah. One old man with us declares that even twenty years ago bones and rags of clothes belonging to the combatants were to be seen. From Mehjar we continued in a N. by W. direction across the largest ḥawī we have yet come to. Dúr, on the other side of the Tigris, looks a bare miserable place: the tomb of Imám Moḥammed Dúr looks from here very much like that of Zobeidah

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\* A sketch of this ruin by Mr. Ross is preserved in the library.

at Baghdád. 11h. 25m. passed a small tel, and turned N. along the Ishákí, which has here only one bank. This mound and some *tel's* in the vale, undoubtedly of very remote antiquity, prove that the háwís, in which the river flows above Sámarráh, must have been formed (whether by degrees or by some extraordinary rush of water) many ages before the Ishákí was dug, while the embayments below Gháim, and in the alluvial soil, must be of much later date, as they have in many places swept away the Nahrawán, a work said by tradition, and with great probability, to be coeval with the Ishákí. At 12h. 30m. got to Sheri'at-el-Wojá, and halted to rest under a large solitary mulberry-tree, called by way of distinction El-Túthá,\* or The Mulberry.

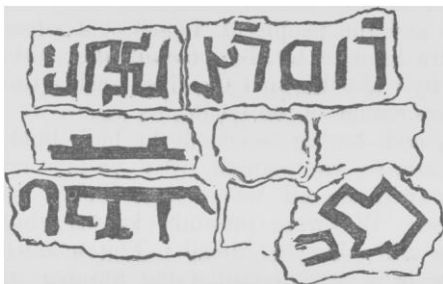
All the háwís crossed in to-day's march were, till a few years back, cultivated by Arabs and the people of Tekrít, but when the Sahmmár Bedwíns were brought to Mesopotamia the cultivators were soon forced to fly. At this spot the river washes the high land and destroys every vestige of the Ishákí.

At 1 P.M. we mounted, and, having ascended the high land, continued on our former course, over rough stony undulating ground, cut up by deep ravines, till we entered Tekrít at 2h. 20m. P.M., and halted. We were instantly known; but Saláh tells the people we are going to Mósul. The modern Tekrít, though consisting of a very considerable number of houses, and governed by a Beg, is scarcely worthy of being called a town. It is built on the cliff, and on the side of a deep ravine, and occupies the eastern part of the site of the ancient city, the ruins of which are very extensive. The ancient walls form a crescent with the cliff of about 1 mile in diameter, running into angles of every description, the intention of which I cannot imagine, the ground being quite flat; and these angles, instead of covering, frequently oppose each other. The ruins of the houses are easily traced, built of round stones in lime, the latter being the principal ingredient. At the southern end of the modern town is a confused pile of ruins, with low gates, called Kenísah, or church, and at the northern end stand the remains of the kalah, or citadel, on a hill detached from the town by a very deep ravine, in which water flowed from the Tigris, according to tradition, making the citadel an island: the eastern face is a steep rock washed by the river. The lower gate is, with part of a stair leading up, still perfect; as are also several buttresses. From the top of the Kal'ah, Dúr bears S.S.E.; Kantarah-el-Rebáb, on the river of Nahrawán, S. by E.; the Fakká', or passage of the Tigris, through the Ḥamrín hills, N.  $\frac{3}{4}$  W. Outside the walls are many ruins and tombs of Mohammedan saints.

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\* Túť, not Túthá, is a mulberry; the latter is probably an ancient Chaldee name.—F.S.

Dread of the Bedwins, under Sufúk, last year-obliged the inhabitants to dig a trench round the modern town; in doing which many buildings and subterraneous chambers were discovered, and also two large earthen vases, which I saw: one is plain, but the other, about 3 feet in height, has round it a border of griffins and human figures entwined by a rope: the execution, however, is very rude. Around the mouth are projections, with sockets and rings. It is made of brownish yellow clay, and is used to hold water by its owner, a certain holy Mullá Rejeb. I tried hard to get it; but nothing would induce the old man to part with it. In wandering about I observed in the wall of a house, built in at random, four brick fragments, bearing this in relief:—



The people of Tekrit are a most inhospitable set; we can scarcely get anything out of them in the way of provender; and, if I had not a Ferman with me, I believe we should get nothing at all. In the evening I found one of my best men, Sayyed Hindi, ill: he was

thrown yesterday by a vicious horse, but did not feel it much till to-day.

10th. — After a vast deal of trouble and wrangling, we succeeded in procuring a few days' provision for ourselves and barley for the horses. We hire a donkey to carry the barley to Sherkát from people going with skins (for rafts) to Járaḥ, for the purpose of floating bitumen to Baghdád. We also take with us a very old Bedwin, named Shi'ál, a servant of Fa'ad, the Sham-már sheikh. Saláḥ thinks he may be useful, and he is, moreover, a capital story-teller. At 2 P.M. we started, going along the high land, first N.N.W., then gradually turning round to N. At 4h. 20m. had an Imám's tomb at some distance on the right: kept now N.W. by N. At 4h. 45m. turned N. by W., crossing over deep ravines, then turned down one, on the left side of which is a large natural cave, often inhabited by travellers, as I see marks of fire in it. At 5h. 30m. turned right, down a deep ravine, for  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an hour, and entered a large háwí, where we halted, having the Tigris close to. On the high bank over us is an ancient small fort, called Kala'h-el-Jebaráníyah. We here found the caravan and our barley; but, as there is very fine grass, we resolve to reserve it. From here the Faḳká' bears N.  $\frac{1}{4}$  W.; extreme end of Jebel Mak-húl N.N.W.

After making all snug, and when every party had squatted down



on its own bivouac-ground, Saláh went round to reconnoitre them : he soon halted in front of one group, and, calling up to him a wild-looking Arab lad, asked him what he wanted here. The lad said he belonged to the caravan, and was going to Járaḥ. Saláh had his sword sheathed in his hand, and without farther ceremony gave the lad a blow with it on the head, which brought him to the ground in an instant, and would have killed any man but an Arab, saying, "You son of a dog! Allah curse both your parents; you are not going to take me in!" Here all the people came up with their arms and sticks to know the cause of such a strange proceeding. Saláh drew his sword, and demanded if any one here present knew the lad. All looked at him, and answered, "No;" that all they knew was that the lad had been seen with the caravan, and that each party thought he had belonged to another. Saláh, at the first glance, knowing the culprit to be a thief slinking along with us, to run away with a horse, or whatever he could find, after dark, proposed instant decapitation; but he was pacified and contented by giving him a good flogging; and, having tied his hands and feet, ordered him to be well guarded till morning.

11th.—The prisoner was discharged after many cuffs and kicks from the donkey-drivers. At 5 A.M. started, keeping about N.N.W., close under the cliff: in  $\frac{1}{2}$  an hour passed a small ancient fort in ruins, on the cliff. It is called Kal'ah Bureyyásh. At 7h. 45m. got to Khán Kharneinah, a fine ruin of the age of the khaliphs. A set of Arabs are now engaged in knocking it down, and floating the bricks on rafts to Baghdád. At this place the high land and the rocks cease, and the country appears to slope gradually to the river. We now turned down N. by E. for  $\frac{1}{2}$  an hour, and halted under some tamarisk-trees on the bank of the Tigris. Here Sayyed Hindí complained very much, and on examination I find two of his ribs broken, so send him back to Tekrít on one of the rafts carrying bricks from the ruin.

The vagabond whose donkey Shi'ál rode refuses to go on, saying the people who hired him at Tekrít hired him only this far. Let the rascal go, determined to pay him off on our return, and gave Shi'ál, Sayyed Hindí's horse. At 1h. 25m. P.M. we again went on, N.W. by N., over undulating sandy ground: the stones and limestone appear to have ceased. At 5 we edged off to the right; and at 5h. 30m. halted at one of many bitter wells, in a large clump of moving sand-hills, called El-Marrás and Ghurabá; extreme of Mak-húl N. by W.; extreme of a lower and more distant range N.N.W. The donkeys have been left far behind.

12th.—At 5 A.M. started, going N.W. by N. to N.N.W., over a plain actually swarming with antelopes. At 8 had sand on our left called Má-sultáníyah (where there are bitter wells), about an hour off. 8h. 30m. going N. by W., closing fast with

Jebel Mak-húl. 9h. 20m. another set of wells and sand-hills called Menjar, left. 9h. 40m. passed the ruins of a stone building called Khán Sultáníyah; on our right is the bluff termination of Mak-húl, and on our left, at various distances, are bitter wells. At 10h. 30m. got to the lowest and last projection of the Hamrín hills, and halted at a small stream of slightly brackish water. The place is called Bilálíj, from two knolls of that name near it. Here we found the donkeys, and, after a sound lecture, Saláh cautioned them against leaving us again, and appointed Sherkat for to-night's halt in case of separation.

At 2h. 30m. p.m. we mounted, and went N.W. over the ridges of the Hamrín, one mass of transparent gypsum, then across the intermediate flat valley called Wádí Jehennem, and at 5h. 15m. got to the top of the last range, here very low, but higher to the right, where it is called Jebel Khánúkah. We saw K'al'ah Sherkat N.E.  $\frac{1}{2}$  N., and, as I was anxious to examine it well, my party posted on straight for it over hill and dale, leaving the donkeys to follow by the beaten path. After no little break-neck sort of work, we reached the ruins at 6h. K'al'ah Sherkat is a gigantic work, an irregular oblong square solid mass, 500 yards long by about 300 broad, its greatest height about 60 feet. It fronts nearly the cardinal points, the longest diameter being from north to south; on the top near the N.E. corner is a conical tel about 40 feet high, built of sun-dried bricks, surrounded by a dyke of rough stones, which in one place runs up part of it.\* Close under this cone, on one corner of the solid square, are a few remains of buildings of cut stones and of most exquisite finish, and all over the building are traceable the foundations of stone edifices, with abundance of broken bricks, pottery, and glass; there is also an Arab burying-ground. The eastern side is washed by the Tigris, the western and southern are guarded by a deep ditch, the northern is in a hawí full of brushwood, and is the most perfect as also the highest; in one or two parts of this latter face are still remaining perfect fronts of the ancient outer facing of very large square cut stones, levelled and fitted to each other with the utinost nicety. In other parts of it are sections which show the solid mass to be composed of sun-dried bricks, but having no reeds interposed as at Babylon and Aker Kúf: in this northern face at the bottom is also seen the entrance of a subterraneous passage fallen in and choked up. I rode all over and round it till dark, endeavouring to find the statue well known to be about here, but failed. The barley did not come up, and as there is but little grass our horses were badly off. Lighted fires and fired guns for the caravan, but to no purpose.

13th.—Nearly eaten up last night by mosquitoes. I have

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\* A sketch of this ruin, by Mr. Ross, is preserved in the library.

never yet met with such fierce and numerous clouds of them. The Tekrítis not having come up at daylight, I again mounted to look for the statue and examine the ruins, and, on going to the southern end of the *Ḳal'ah*, was surprised to find the ruins and mounds of a very large city covered with stones, bricks, pottery, &c., and in places where cut away by the river, showing hundreds of sepulchral vases. The ruins occupy a sort of triangle, perhaps a mile or a mile and a half in length, formed on the east by the Tigris, on the west by *Jebel Khánúḳah*, and on the north by the *Ḳal'ah* and other ruins.\*

I kept wandering over the ruins for 3 hours without discovering the statue; from the *Ḳal'ah* at the conical mound, *Jebel-el-Nejm* near *Mósul* bore N.  $\frac{1}{2}$  E. Two tels (across the river), called *El Abr*, N. N.E.; *Kará Chók* hills extend from E. by N. to N.N.E.; gap in them through which the lesser *Záb* flows N.E. I now went back to our people and found the donkeys and barley had fairly given us the slip; finding ourselves in this condition, *Saláh* called a council of war, and, after commenting very strongly upon the treachery of the Tekrítis and the revenge he should have on his return, he told old *Shi'al* the object of our coming, and said that, as *Al Ḥaḍhr* was only a day's journey off, it would be a disgrace to turn back, and proposed that, as the horses were good, and a chance of green grass inland, and that as we could see the ruins and return to *Tekrit* in 5 days, we should trust in God and go on. We unanimously agreed to his proposal, and, after the Arabs had repeated a short prayer aloud for safety and divine protection, we at 7h. 30m. A.M. mounted and struck off N.W.  $\frac{1}{2}$  W., first over undulating ground, then along the bed of a small brackish stream in a small valley called *Wádi-el-Meheih*. At 9h. 30m. halted at a plot of fine green grass to give the horses a feed, *Sherḳat* bearing S.E.  $\frac{1}{2}$  E. Here I observed the Arabs were evidently not at ease; each got on the top of a small knoll, and, lying flat on his face, kept scanning the horizon in all directions for upwards of an hour, looking for smoke or any signs of human beings being about. At noon we mounted; at 2 P.M. *Sherḳat* bore S.E.  $\frac{3}{4}$  E.: here we crossed a brackish rivulet called *'Ain-el-Tha'leb*: the country now consists of long low undulating ridges, like the waves of the sea, and we can see nothing beyond the one we happen to be on. Between each undulation is a valley which in winter must have abundance of water. The Arabs are now gloomy and silent, looking suspiciously about; their very features are changed, and, as I happen to have the best eyes of the party, they are constantly reminding me to make good use of them. At 4 P.M., in ascending one of the backs or ridges, came upon the foundation of a thick stone wall or pavement run-

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\* A small plan of these ruins accompanies Mr. Ross's MS.

ning in a straight line nearly N.W. At 4h. 15m. I saw ruins far distant W. by S., which the Arabs instantly pronounced to be Al Hāḍhr, and we changed our course straight for them. The distant ruins soon appeared with an awfully grand effect; a thick black cloud, behind them, was darting out the most vivid flashes of lightning, and we could distinctly hear the peals of thunder. Old Salāh shook his head and said, "Sir, I do not like this, we should not have come here; this ground belongs to Iblís." I confess I myself felt a sort of creeping sensation coming over me. At 5h. 15m. having reached grass and water, and finding it impossible to arrive at the ruins to-night, we halted, and had barely time to fasten the cattle and huddle together, when there burst over us the most terrific storm I ever beheld: we were ankle deep in water in a few minutes, though on a slight declivity. The storm lasted for about 4 hours, and the water settled into the valley; yet in less than an hour afterwards the Arabs, to my astonishment, contrived to light a fire and boil a little coffee. This revived us, and, as sleep was entirely out of the question, old Shi'āl related to us many extraordinary anecdotes of the celebrated Shammār Sheikh Bānáyá, whose servant he had been from his own childhood till the Sheikh's death; some of them were very curious;—I here insert them:—

The tribe one evening was forced to encamp on a part of the desert near Sinjār, where not a bit of shrub nor a blade of grass could be procured. They had scarcely pitched the tents when some of the 'Aneizah (at that time friends) arrived and halted at the tent of Binnáyá. Not to give them coffee, and even dinner, would have been an everlasting disgrace, and how to cook either no one could divine. At last Binnáyá went to a travelling merchant, who happened to be with the tribe, and bought two bales of coarse cotton cloth; these he had torn up and soaked in melted butter: with this a fire was made, and the guests had as good a dinner as was ever cooked in Bedwin camp: Old Shi'āl swore he himself tore up the cotton.

Two men came before him to settle a difference. One claimed a camel from the other; and, his case being clear, the sheikh decided in his favour: the other demurred, and Binnáyá sent them to the old men, who confirmed the first sentence. Still the defendant would not give in; so the sheikh sent for him, and after some abuse, gave him a poke, seemingly a slight one, with the small crooked-headed stick always used by the Bedwins; yet so tremendous was his strength, that the wood passed through the poor man's chest and out at his back, killing him dead on the spot. The Sheikh had to pay his blood-money.

On another occasion, while sitting with a number of people in his tent, he observed two eyes peeping through the reed mat

which separates the women's part of the tent from that of the men, and, this being once or twice repeated, he became annoyed, and took up the iron pestle used to pound the coffee: after seemingly playing with it for a few seconds, he threw it, to all appearance carelessly, against the mat: a shriek followed, and, on the people going in, his own wife was found dead, her head having been smashed by the force of the blow.

Binnáyá, when the tribe fought, always charged first alone: he wielded his weapons equally well with both hands, and the terror of his name and appearance was such that a thousand men would scarcely venture to oppose him. He was tall and gaunt, with a scanty beard, large eyes, long projecting teeth, and an immense long hooked nose. Once, when out with a small party, he fell in with a large force of the 'Aneizah (then at feud), and, having put a reserve spear between his thigh and the saddle, charged singly. His first spear soon broke; the second shared the same fate: he took to his sword, which also went close to the hilt. The enemy pressed upon him, and Binnáyá was, for the first time in his life, seen to turn his back and run: he soon, however, pulled up, when it appeared that in the interim he had separated the stirrup-leather from the saddle, and, swinging the heavy iron round his head, returned, though desperately wounded, to the fray: his friends followed, and the day was soon decided. He here received a wound in the shoulder, which for years did not heal, and eventually protruded into a large mass of raw flesh: for this he came to Baghdád, and was sent to the medical officer attached to the British resident, as the only person who could cure him. The surgeon proposed to cut it out: the sheikh consented to have it done instantly, but positively refused to allow any one to hold him during the operation, which he bore with the most perfect indifference, telling the operator to cut deep and never fear.

The death of this extraordinary man was a vile business, and will remain for ages a foul stain on all those concerned in it. He was fighting with the Montafik under blind Ḥamúd, and had for some days driven them all before him. One night, however, it rained, and next morning, on renewing the fight on slippery ground, and after doing wonders, his mare fell with him; she broke her leg, and, rolling over him, broke his back. While in this state and alone a party of Montafik, headed by 'I'sa (the present Sheikh) were galloping past. Binnáyá called to them, and, making himself known to them, told them to go and tell Ḥamúd that he was hurt and dying, and wanted to see him, as all enmity must now cease. 'I'sa told his party that, if they carried Binnáyá alive to Ḥamúd, the latter would be sure to spare him,—a thing which never must be done; at the same instant he thrust his spear through the prostrate hero, and several others followed the

brutal example. They then cut off his head and sent it to Baghdād to the Páshá, who ordered it to be thrown to a lion; but the animal not only refused to touch it, but sprang about his cage in the utmost terror until the head was drawn back. Here Old Shi'ál shed tears, and, stroking his beard, ejaculated, "Oh, 'I'sa, the curse of God upon him who begot you, and on her who brought you forth: but I have had my revenge: not very long ago I saw Ajal, the Montafik Sheikh, on the earth, like a dog, and fifty Shammár spears through his body, and perhaps I may yet see your grave defiled."

One of Binnáyá's daughters is still living, and is looked upon by the Shammár as little inferior to a deity. She holds a divan every evening, and her word is law. I have several times gone to her tent, and she once or twice sent me a dinner. She sits behind a screen at her evening meetings: her name is Abtah.

14th.—At 4h. 30m. A.M. mounted and made straight in the direction of the ruins; at 6h. saw them; at 6h. 30m. came to a hollow in which is a very large natural cave, with a small stream of water issuing from it. At 6h. 40m. got to the Tharthar, in a Wádi about 200 yards broad covered with grass. The Tharthar itself is here about 50 feet broad, deep, and the water just drinkable. We wandered up and down, but could find no ford: at last Šaláh and I stripped to our shirts, and I tied my watch, compass, and note-book on my head, and, being sure of my horse, plunged in, followed by Šaláh, at 7h. 45m. The current was rapid, but a few strokes landed us in safety. We reached the ruins at 8h. 10m. I shall give the description of them at the end, and here go on with the journal of our doings.

We had been about two hours among the ruins taking rough sketches, measurements, &c., and I was just proceeding to measure the diameter of the city walls, and to count the bastions, when I saw on a rising ground in the distant horizon to the north a horseman. I called Šaláh, but he could not distinguish him. While pointing out the direction I saw another join the first. Šaláh still doubted, saying it must be a wild hog or a bush, as no human being could be there, for if the Aneízah were out they must appear from the south, or if the Shammár, from the west. The appearance of a third, though still invisible to Šaláh, settled the business. He said, with a hollow, changed voice, "We must be off. Allah! Allah! what brought us here?" and off we went, as hard as our horses could, to join our people. I had just time in passing to observe that the general course of the Tharthar is S.E. and S. by E. On getting to our people we instantly saddled, and at 10h. 40m. we were on our return, flying by the same route which brought us. I told Šaláh to be more calm—we

were five, the enemy only three : he called out, " Oh, Sir, where you see dogs you will find fleas."

At 11h. we heard the horrible war-howl of Arabs behind us. Şaláh called out to us to stand fast together while he went to meet them. If they are Shammár we shall be plundered, but if Aneizah my party may get off, but the Bedwins must fall. I ordered my people to be cool, and not on any account to fire unless I ordered. We were in a hollow, and our speeches were cut short by the appearance of about a hundred horsemen coming over the low ridge behind us at full gallop, and about the same number on our flank. The sight, though far from pleasant, was very grand; the wild disorder, loose flying robes of every colour, spears with round tufts of ostrich-feathers; the howling and yelling had a most romantic effect. When within about 150 yards my camel-man called out that they were Shammár (he himself was of that tribe), and told us not to attempt resistance. In another instant they were upon us, and I found myself alone, separated from my people, whose horses had started, perfectly jammed up by the Arabs, and their spears within a few inches of every part of my body. One called to me to dismount and throw down my gun. I asked, " And if I do?" he answered, " Safety; fear not." I uncocked my gun, and laid it across the saddle; they at the same time shouldered their spears. One seized me by the clothes, and, my horse having kicked out at his, the part gave way; another then seized my gun, and pulled me off, and in the fall the gun remained with him. My old horse appeared to take the matter up, and by kicking and fighting cleared an open space: in the mean time, Şaláh had been undergoing the same treatment, but, getting a hearing, said he was an Ajeíl and a Shammári. The chief asked what he did here? Şaláh said, " By Allah, we were going from 'Alí Páshá to Moḥammed Páshá of Mósul, and that I was an Albanian." The chief answered, " Oh, Bedwín, do not lie: first, this is not the road; and, secondly, your backs are to Mósul, and your faces to Baghdád." All called out, " They are from Reshíd Páshá; cut the dogs' heads off." A second scramble took place; our camel was made to kneel, and the baggage thrown off. I was knocked down, and in an instant was nearly naked, when an old man (for they were still galloping up by dozens) pushed them all aside with an air of authority, calling out in a thundering voice, " Avast (awásh)! that is no Turk,—that is the Báliyóz.\* I saw him two years ago in Sheikh Zebaïd's tent: let no one touch him; I protect him." An immediate calm ensued, when Şaláh, now nearly naked, advanced, and said, " Now that

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\* Consul, from the Greek Balios, and Italian Bailo.—F. S.

you know us, I shall tell you the truth ;—that is the Bāliyóz ; we came here to see Al Ḥaḍhr, and we are now going back.” Everything was now set right ; an order was given to restore everything taken, even to a hair, if one had fallen from our heads, and duly obeyed. We sat on the ground good friends. Their chief told us we had done a very foolish thing in coming here without their knowledge, as it was dangerous ground ; they never see any one here except themselves or their enemies, and for the latter they had taken us. He then said in the most beautiful Arabic style, “ If we had in the hurry killed you all, what answer could we give your friends, or what satisfaction could they expect ? When we find strange people here, it is not the time to ask who they are, or whence they have come ; Allah has saved you.” He then told us that all was in confusion, that Reshíd Páshá had in a most treacherous manner seized their sheikh, Sufúk, while a guest in the Turkish camp on the most solemn pledge of safety, and had sent him prisoner to Constantinople ; consequently the Shammar had all rebelled and come to the desert. They then invited us to their camp, and I was inclined to go, but Ṣalaḥ whispered to me that we must get off as soon as possible, for as soon as the seizure of Sufúk was known there would be a great outbreak in Mesopotamia.

They are the 'Abdah and Aslam branches of the Shammar, and had seen me this morning on the top of the ruins, when, taking us for Aneizah, the tocsin was sounded : even as long as we remained with them parties were dashing in. All carried reed spears, and many rode beautiful horses. After many protestations and oaths by the Arabs, that their tribe and ours had, thank God ! always been friends, and that they had never seen anything from us but good (illá-al-khīr), and that, please God, that friendship would last for ever, the affair of to-day being nothing at all, and after many huggings and kissings, we parted, they to their tents, and we on our return. At 12h. 30m. P.M. we were fairly clear of our friends, and keeping an E. by S. course. I observed the Wādī here are covered with wild barley, but the horses will not eat of it. At 2 h. 15 m. halted for ten minutes to breathe our cattle, and then went on S.E. by E. At 4 h. got on the more elevated of the two ridges, called El-Kaṭr, seemingly the termination of the Hamrín range, Al Ḥaḍhr, bearing W.N.W., Kaḷ'ah Sherkat E.N.E., Mak-húl S.E. by S. We now kept along the ridge in a south-easterly direction. At 5 h. we turned off more to the eastward to look for water, till 6 h. 15 m., when, finding nothing better, we were fain to halt at a salt-water pool, round which was abundance of good grass.

15th.—Old Shi'al took his leave to go in quest of Sheikh Fa'ad, somewhere in the direction of Mósul, after I had given him a



present, which, though small, exceeded his most sanguine expectations.

At 4 A.M. we started, going S.S.E.  $\frac{1}{2}$  E. At 6 h. 20 m. joined our former route in Wádi Jehennem, just where the road crosses the ravine, and made straight for Bilálíj, where we arrived in an hour, and halted, our horses very much annoyed by the purgative qualities of last night's water. At 9 h. we mounted, and kept on our former route. At 12 h. 20 m. P.M. had Sultáníyah wells on our right. At 2 h. 15 m. got to El-Marrás, and halted till 3 h., then on again. About the sand-hillocks here we found foot-marks of a numerous body of horse, not twelve hours old, so Saláh was again uneasy, and as we went along was always calling to me, as God had given me sharp eyes, to make good use of them now, for in this cursed country it was necessary to have eyes all round the head,—ay, and (by Allah!) even in the crown of the head, for he believed those Shammár (Allah confound them!) sometimes dropped from the clouds. From El-Marrás we kept S.S.E., and at 6 h. P.M. stopped on the bank of the Tigris under Kharneinah, close to our former halt.

16th.—At 4 h. A.M. started on our old road. At 5 h. 15 m. saw an opening in the rock on our right very much like the door of an artificial cave; it is too high up to be accessible. At 6 h. 20 m. passed Bureyyásh, and at 6 h. 55 m. halted on our former ground under Jeberáníyah till 8 h., then on as before, the horses lagging much. Exactly at noon we got to Tekrit, our poor animals knocked up from fatigue and hunger, being the fifth day without corn.

I found Sayyed Hindí with ague, in addition to his broken bones. In the evening, the governor and all the old men having assembled to congratulate us on our return, and to hear our adventures (they being in great alarm about us after the return of the donkeys from Járaḥ), Saláh made a formal statement of the barley affair, abusing the Tekrítis *en masse* for the most notorious scoundrels and lying rascals Allah ever created, and swore he should not leave the place, neither should he eat in it, until the barley or its price, its hire, and that of Shi'ál's donkey were returned. The kádhí being present gave a verdict in Saláh's favour. I now told Saláh that, as we were by God's blessing safely returned, we ought to let all pass. He said, in great passion, "Oh, sir, you do not know these dogs; they themselves say that they are of the same tribe as the Mósul Gaurs, but I suspect they are Jews: by Allah they even will not pray unless they be paid for doing it." At this a shudder went through the assembly: some called out to give him all he wanted, others to give him ten-fold rather than be called Káfirs; and I found some difficulty in preventing a rupture.

17th.—Halted to refresh. Saláh made the fellows pay back his barley, but was persuaded to forgive them the rest.

18th.—Left Sayyed Hindí to come down by a kelek, or raft, and at 5 h. A.M. started on our former course. Soon after leaving Tekrit we overtook a caravan of camels returning unladen from Mósul to Baghdád, and joined it. At 6 h. 20 m. got to Sher'at-el-Wojá, and halted till 6 h. 45 m., then went on. At 7 h. 10 m. passed a large square mound inside the Ishákí; at 8 h. 30 m. arrived opposite Dúr; and at 10 h. 15 m. halted on the river's bank. At noon continued our journey, halting occasionally to graze the cattle; the camels will not pass a clump of thistles without eating them up. At 5 h. 45 m. halted, intending to remain all night. The Málawíyah N.E. by E.  $\frac{1}{2}$  E., 'Ashik N. by W.  $\frac{1}{2}$  W.; Kaff-el-Kelb N.W. About sunset clouds of mosquitoes came out, and the camels would not keep quiet; so at 7 h. 30 m. we again went on, and at 11 h. halted on the high land S. of Istábolát.

19th.—At 4 h. A.M. set out along the Dijeil, which makes numerous angles. At 5 h. 15 m. crossed a small dyke, running S.S.E. and N.N.W., forming a triangular enclosure with the Dijeil and Chalú; at 5 h. 40 m. crossed the Chalú, and kept to the left of our former route. At 6 h. 15 m. halted. I here killed a spotted snake 5 feet long, with a large head and small neck: it had very long fangs, and is the first poisonous snake I have seen in this country. At 6 h. 30 m. again went on; old canals running in every direction. At 7 h. 45 m. halted at the bridge of Harbah till 8 h. 30 m., then crossed it, and passing the ruins of that place went straight for Sumeichah. We went for some time in and along the Shaṭ-aihdá: it is not so broad as the Tigris, winds a good deal, and is covered with verdure, but has here no water in it, as far as I can see. At 9 h. 40 m. we were going over the ruins of a very considerable city, consisting of mounds covered with broken bricks, pottery, glass, &c., and sepulchral vases; the ruins are on both sides of the Shaṭ-aihdá, and appear to be very extensive—the Arabs knew of no name for them. At 10 h. 20 m. crossed a large ancient canal, and soon afterwards another. At 11 h. 45 m. got to Sumeichah, and halted. Jóhar Aghá left here this morning for Baghdád.

20th.—At 3 h. 50 m. A.M. started on the high road as formerly, having picked up the Arab we left here in going. We leave the caravan of camels to follow. 5 h. 15 m. passed Sayyed Ibráhim, and kept the beaten road westward of our former one; at 6 h. 15 m. had Tarmíyah on our left; crossed an ancient canal which goes southerly. At 7 h. 30 m. kept W. to avoid marshes formed by the Tigris. At 9 h. 30 m. hauling round to our left again; 10 h. crossed a canal running E.N.E. From 11 h. till noon we were employed in picking a passage through the marshes which have

come over from the Saḵláwiyah since we were here before. Passed between Kádhimein and the Tigris, and at 1h. 30m. P.M. reached the gate of Baghdád.

My examination of the ruins of Al Ḥadhr having been put a stop to in such a sudden and disagreeable manner in May, 1836, I determined to revisit them as soon as possible; accordingly, early in May, 1837, a party of Shammár Arabs being about to return from Baghdád to join the Sheikh, who was encamped near the ruins, I resolved to accompany them, and, having easily made their acquaintance, and all arrangements being settled, on

*May 10th*, 1837, at 7h. 45m. A.M., we left Baghdád by the Kádhimein gate; the party consisting of myself, two servants, seven Shammár Bedwins, and a native of Baghdád going on business to the tribe. The Bedwins carry a present from 'Alí Páshá to Moham-med-el Fáris,\* the Shammár Sheikh. After passing Kádhimein we kept to the right of my former route, much nearer the river. At 9h. 40m. passed a flat mound called Tel Kaṣr.† At 10h. 25m. touched the river at Sher'at-el-Beidhá.‡ At 11h. 35m. got to Tel Kúsh,§ and halted in a small camp. Kádhimein indistinctly seen through a date-grove S. by E., Khán Suweidíyah N. At 2h. 35m. P.M. we again went on N.N.E. At 5h. 35m. came upon large ancient canals, called Madód, the main branch running N. and S. Here robbers generally wait for caravans, the high mound affording capital concealment. We now went over plains and low flat mounds, completely covered with broken pottery and bricks, evidently the site of a populous town, in a direction N.N.W., having the Shaṭ-aidhá on our left; it winds very much, but is not broad. At 6h. 22m. turned west along a curve of the Shaṭ-aidhá, thinking we saw tents, but, soon finding ourselves mistaken, we came back to our old course. At 6h. 45m. passed Tel Tarmíyah, a complete mass of broken bricks, seemingly modern, or at least not of very ancient date. At 6h. 55m., seeing a fire, made for it, but on reaching it we found only a few camel-herds, so turned back to get to the road, and shortly passed the ruins of Wánah, and soon afterwards some rather large *tels* and a small tomb. At 9h., hearing dogs bark, we turned off to the northward for them, and in half an hour halted in a small camp.

*11th.*—At daylight found the country covered with scoræ and small mounds, Sumeichah bearing N.W. At 5h. 25m. A.M. started, crossing a bight of the Shaṭ-aidhá, here broader. At 6h. passed an imám's tomb, about half a mile on our right; and soon after entered Sumeichah, and halted till 9h. 45m., then went on in

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\* The Horseman, Cavaliere.

† Castle Hill.

‡ White River.

§ Bird Hill.—F. S.

a N.N.W. course. At 1h. 20m. p.m. reached Harbah, and halted in a corn-field for half an hour; then went on, having the Dijeil close on our left, and occasionally touching the Shat-aidhá on the right. At 2h. 50m. a ruined village, called Alth, across the Shat-aidha. At 3h. 10m. entered a háwí. At 3h. 35m. crossed a branch from the Dijeil in a high aqueduct, and in ten minutes halted at the tent of Tha'ar, Sheikh of the Mujammerah. The poor man is blind: some years ago a party of 'Alí Páshá's háitás halted in his camp, and when dinner came in they objected to its quality: the Sheikh said he was sorry for it, but he gave the best he had: the háitás became abusive, drew their weapons, and a fight ensued: almost the first shot knocked out both Tha'ar's eyes. Most of the háitás were instantly murdered; the rest, by escaping to the neighbouring tents, and taking Dakhil, escaped.

At 8h. 25m. p.m. we mounted, going W. for a few minutes, crossed the Dijeil, the water being only to the girths, and then kept on the high road, as in my former journey. A large snake got amongst the horses' feet, and hissed like an enraged cat, but fortunately did not bite any of them; the animals snorted and trembled with fright. At 10h. 45m. passed through Istábolát, and kept on till the

12th.—At 12h. 25m. a.m. we halted in a háwí. At 3h. 45m. again went on. At 5h. 40m. halted under 'A'shiḵ till 6h., then on again. At 9h. halted on the river's bank till 10h. 20m., then on. At 10h. 40m. passed Mehjar. At 1h. 15m. p.m. halt under the Túthá till 1h. 50m., then leave the háwí as formerly. At 3h. 5m. got to Tekrít, and halted: I went to the house of, I believe, the only honest man in the town, Hájí 'Omar. There has been a change of government since my last visit. The people cannot make out my object in going again to Al Ḥadhr, unless to bring away a treasure which they say I found there last time.

13th.—At 4h. 50m. a.m. started as formerly; at 7h. 30m. edging off to the right for the river by a very dangerous road over the face of a high cliff, the river washing under it. At 8h. 15m. halted under Jeberáníyah till 8h. 45m., then went on. At 11h. 30m. halted under Kharneinah till 1h. 20m. p.m., when, about twenty Shammár Arabs having come up, mounted on camels, we went along with them for their tents, keeping the Sultáníyah road, course north-westerly. At 7h. 5m. halted in an immense camp of the Shammár at Sultáníyah bitter wells.

The Arabs are the Alian branch of the tribe, under Sheikh Dukheil-ibn-Shebánah, to whose tent we went, and met with a real Arab welcome. I got the Sheikh's own camel-saddle to lean against as a pillow, and, as no concealment of my character was necessary, we were at home with each other. The Sheikh is a venerable-looking old man, and is looked upon as one of the pa-

triarchs of the tribe, and has great influence. After about an hour had been spent in coffee-drinking, smoking, and news-telling, about ten or a dozen men carried in a sort of net a huge wooden dish of boiled rice; others followed with one of stewed meat: part of the latter was shovelled over the former by the not over-clean hands of the Bedwíns; and over all were poured a pot of melted butter and a skin of sour milk, and then to work we went. As one set left the dish another sat down; and I am certain that after all present, not less than a hundred, had finished, enough for fifty more was carried away. After this we had coffee, and then troughs of fresh camel's milk were brought in, of which each drank *ad libitum*; the milk, with the exception of being slightly salt, was equal to the richest cream. Outside the tent was placed in a rude sort of tripod a monstrous leathern bucket, filled with camel's milk; to this our horses were led up in succession, and they drank very copiously with great zest.

14th.—At 5h. 50m. we mounted, and continued N.N.W. and N.W. At 7h. 30m. came to a circular set of mounds enclosing a space of about 100 to 150 yards in diameter, and covered with scorixæ. The Arabs could give no name for it. At 8h. 20m. came to a large camp in a hollow called Manjûr, filled with pools of water, and said to extend considerably to the right and left.

At 9h. 30m. had a lake with a thin covering of salt on our left, called Sabakhah. At 9h. 40m. halted in a hollow: not far off, on the left, are white hillocks, said to be on the Tharthar. At 10h. 10m. went on again; and at 11h. 45m. reached the Tharthar. Crossed it, only knee deep; and in 5 min. halted in a camp of the Zóbah branch of the Shammár: got breakfast; and at 3h. 35m. P.M. continued along the Tharthar till 4h. 50m., when we unexpectedly came upon a vast camp, known to be the Sheikh's by the large tents; when, having crossed the Tharthar, we halted. This camp left Al Ḥaḍhr two days ago. Moḥammed el Fáris, the Sheikh, is absent collecting a present for 'Alí Páshá, but we were well received by his younger brother, Nijirib. In a short time after our arrival, Nejm, the Sheikh's uncle, came to see us, he being at present the ruler and patriarch. I gave him the letters from the Páshá, and from Colonel Taylor, requesting his assistance in forwarding our object. These were, as usual, read in public, and every one gave his opinion against our going. They said this was the rear camp of the tribe, and the 'Aneizah were hanging about, no one knowing for a moment where they were, or in what quarter they might appear. Only a few days ago they seized a large herd of camels; but the Shammár, getting immediate warning, pursued and re-captured the herd, and the robbers, twenty in number: eight or ten of the latter were put to

death on the spot; the rest were bound and kept for ransom. After a great deal of discussion on my affair, old Nejm declared, "That as 'Alī Páshá had written it, go I should;" that Nijirib and a party of horsemen should accompany me, and that the camp should not be moved till our return. I agreed to the proposal, and resolved to leave all baggage and my own people behind, in order to go light, and endeavour to do all in one day. During this day's march I saw about a dozen very large encampments, and I am certain upwards of 10,000 or 12,000 camels; yet we have only seen a very inconsiderable part of this enormous tribe.

This year the Tharthar is very low, and the water abominably bitter and salt, the source of it having been blocked up by the Yezídis in Jebel Sinjár.

15th.—Formed a party of eleven spears with the young Sheikh. I only take three of my own people. At 6h. 15m. A.M. we crossed the Tharthar, and went over the country at a quick walk, about N.W. by N. The Tharthar was close to us for about 1 hour; it then took a sweep to the right. At 10h. 45m. were surprised to see tents on the stream; made for them; and at 11h. 20m., on getting close to them, found all the men under arms, but their number only about twenty. Nijirib galloped up alone to them, and quieted their alarm. They prove to be a few families of the Al Bú Mohammed Arabs flying to the Shammár for protection, as the Ancízah are out in good earnest; as is also Fa'ad, the deposed Shammár Sheikh, with a band. My fellows got a good deal staggered by the intelligence; but, as the ruins were close to, I promised to be ready to return at sunset. At 11h. 45m. turned off left; and at 12h. 30m. P.M. got to Al Ḥaḍhr. I examined the ruins thoroughly, as afterwards described. At last, being unable to keep my people in good humour any longer (and one of them, an old man, bringing up my horse and saying, "For God's sake, my son, take for this once the advice of an old man, who has seen many days, and let us return!"), we at 4h. 15m. P.M. mounted and kept about S.S.E., often cantering. A snake having started, Nijirib drove his spear right through its head. The Arabs called out, "Bravo!" I said it was an accident: he threw it down, and said, "Where will you have me pierce it this time?" I said, in the tail: the reptile was wriggling about, yet he made a rush at it, and in an instant it was whirling in the air on the point of the spear, the weapon having passed within an inch of the point of the tail. At sunset we could see the Al Bú Mohammed marching in the distance to the left, across the Tharthar. At 9h. 30m. we reached our camp in safety, after a ride of upwards of 50 miles. From the ruins the Sinjár mountains are seen high in the N.W.

16th.—At 6 A.M. the Arabs struck their tents, and marched

along the stream till 7h. 10m., then halted and pitched. To-day the Yezídís are coming in by scores, men, women, and children, flying from the Turks under Háfiz Páshá, who has already conquered nearly all the district of Sínjár.

17th.—There being good grass, the Arabs halted. To-day died Kheblah, the famous mare of Sufúk.

18th.—Struck tents, and at 6 A.M. marched along the Tharthar. At 7h. 30m. a tel, called Suweísah,  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a mile on our left. I rode to it, and found it covered with scoríæ; centre of Mak-húl bearing E.  $\frac{1}{2}$  S. We kept about S.S.E., at a little distance from the stream. At 8h. 20m. came to Nejm's camp; and he insisted upon our party and the Sheikh's halting to feed, which we did, the Arabs all going on. Nejm, with the Zeidán, is pitched to-day near a pool of rain water, which, though horrid stuff, is delicious after the Tharthar water. Nejm's feed was like the others; except that, to show us greater respect, he covered the whole dish over with about two stones of butter, so that I was obliged to thrust my arm up to the elbow through butter, in order to grope underneath for rice and a bit of mutton. After all had been demolished, I went out, to the great wonder of the Arabs, to measure the dish, it being the largest I ever saw. It was made of pieces of wood fastened together by twine; and I found its diameter exactly 4 feet  $9\frac{1}{4}$  inches, and that it contained to-day, at one time, the divided carcasses of four full-grown sheep: as to the quantities of rice, melted butter, butter, and sour milk, I should be afraid to hazard a guess. In the evening we rode on to our own camp.

19th.—There being plenty of grass, did not move. This was about the hottest day I ever felt.

20th.—Halted. I observe the valley of the Tharthar gets broader, and has lately been cultivated, the water-courses, and even the shapes of the fields, being still visible. The stream here winds more than above. At 9 A.M. a camel with two people on his back came up to the tent, and one of them was no other than Mohammed el Fáris, Sheikh Shammár, ruler of upwards of 12,000 families. He was a fine-looking young man, with large eyes, a slightly aquiline nose, and wore his hair in long plaited tresses, hanging over his shoulders. He was very well dressed; but appears to have discarded the effeminate practice of wearing shoes, and even trousers. He made many excuses for being away so long, declaring that the instant he learned our being in his camp he mounted on his return, and had been in the saddle since yesterday at noon. The news of his arrival soon spread; and in an hour the tent and the whole front of it presented a dense mass of the wildest human beings I ever saw. Every naked rascal, as he arrived, went up to the Sheikh, and, having kissed him, sat down

to light his pipe without the slightest ceremony. The páshá's present, consisting of a full suit of clothes, was brought forward, and, while the letter accompanying it was being read, every man stood up, and, when finished, all called out "God lengthen 'Alí Páshá's days!" The dresses were put on the Sheïkh; but they did not appear to sit easy. The Kashmír turban was too heavy for the head, and was taken off and presented to the person sitting next him. The other articles were soon dispersed in a similar manner, and in 20 minutes Moḥammed wore only his own Bedwín dress.

21st. — Struck our tents, and at 6h. 15m. A.M. marched along the stream. At 7h. passed a small tel with broken pottery on it; this, with the country about, is called Baḳḳah. At 8h. 20m. halted on the Tharthar, a white tel called Ajerí, about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile before us; the tomb of Sheïkh Hedíd distant  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hour, and on the eastern bank. The Tharthar continues in a direction nearly S.S.E. till lost in the salt lake inland from "Ashik.

Yesterday I felt rather heavy, and to-day was seized with very strong fever and dysentery, I suppose owing to bad water and the intense heat; but the Arabs declare it is owing to having eaten some small fish shot yesterday by Sayyed Hindí in the Tharthar.

About noon old Dukheíl came to visit the Sheïkh, and brought the disagreeable intelligence of the 'Aneizah having sent three ghazás, or plundering parties, into Mesopotamia: they severally crossed the Euphrates at Hillah, Jubbah, and above 'A'nah, and were last heard of going towards the Tarmíyah. I consequently determined to be off for Tekrít before things got worse, and there see what is to be done. The plan laid down by the Sheïkh and the old men for us was to start after dusk for Dukheíl's camp at Sultáníyah, stay there all to-morrow, then at night to go on, and hide next day in the thick wood about Kharneínah, and get into Tekrít on the third morning. I seemingly agreed to it, but, after a private consultation with Sayyed Hindí, determined upon quite another mode of proceeding as soon as we were clear of the tents. I got several of the chiefs to point out on the compass the bearing of Sultáníyah: this was done in presence of the Arabs going with us, and they were satisfied that we could not now go wrong. After dinner, though far from well, I determined to be off, when the Sheïkh brought me a present of a horse trained to plundering excursions, which he declares will, if it should come to a run, carry me off from all the 'Aneizah.

Our party, nine in number, mounted, and, after taking leave and having had prayers said for our safety, we at 7h. 40m. P.M. moved on in an E. by S. direction. I soon found the Arabs were going straight for Sultáníyah, but, as I declared the compass must be right, they were easily persuaded to keep to the right of the



true course. At 11h. 30m. we were going E. over sandy ground called Zobeídí.

22nd.—At 1 A.M. kept edging to the right. At 2h. kept E. by S., and at 2h. 20m. got to the high road, when the Arabs at once discovered that I had taken them completely out of the track they intended coming by. Our object was now gained; and, having told them it would be a disgrace for us to turn back to Sulṭáníyah, as well as a loss of time, we must put our trust in God and go at once straight on for Tekrít. Sayyed Hindí smoothed them down, and we went on. At 3h. 35m. halted till 4h., then on again S.E. by S. I now felt very weak. At 6h. passed Kharneínah. At 7h. 15m. halted on the bank of the Tigris. I had now almost lost all sense of feeling in the lower limbs, and became covered with a cold clammy sweat, but I never recollect having experienced so great a pleasure as I did in drinking a draught of the Tigris water after the horrid stuff we have had for the last ten days. At 8h. 10m. A.M. went on again. At 9h. 42m. went up from the háwí at Jeberáníyah, and just as we got to the high land we found foot-marks of horses not an hour old, and in another minute saw the horses themselves in the bush below. Their owners sprang upon them and fell in; we closed up, lighted matches, and got ready: they were about  $\frac{1}{2}$  a mile off, and only eight in number. The Shammár at once knew them to be 'Aneízah, and we prepared for a skirmish (being only nine), keeping on the high road, daring them to come on with prime abuse, but they stood still close together. My men declared it would be in vain to charge them, their cattle being fresh, while ours were done up: moreover, some of our men being on camels, we should be obliged to divide, a thing not at all advisable. As long as we could see them they had not moved. The excitement of the affair caused re-action in me, and I was now in a burning fever. As we went on the day became dreadfully hot, the glare intolerable, and not a breath of wind stirring. I thought it was to be my last; my senses deserted me, and all I can recollect is that at 1 P.M. we got to Tekrít.

About sunset I awoke and found myself in Hájí 'Omar's house, covered up and in a most profuse perspiration, and consequently much easier. A small thermometer, cut to 125° in the usual sort of leather case, was burst in my pocket by to-day's heat.

I find the road by Mesopotamia is not to be attempted at present, so I determine to dismiss the Arabs here, and send them down by Sámarrah; and, finding myself perfectly inadequate to another day's ride, I have made up my mind to go down by water, and have ordered a kelek, or raft, to be made.

23rd.—I feel very weak to-day; my servant and two of the Arabs are ill, one of the latter quite delirious, and so ill, that I

must take him with me. After breakfast sent the Arabs off. About 10h. A.M. I had a most violent attack of vomiting and cramp in the stomach, followed by smart fever: however, when the raft was ready, we all went on board, and at 1h. 15m. P.M. cast off. About the Withán there are many islands in the river; in our channels the lowest casts were 8, 7, and  $5\frac{1}{2}$  feet. At 4h. 20m. passed Dúr; had 7 feet. At 5h. 10m. passed the Nahráwán, and at 10h. 30m. brought to off Sámarráh to give the people a few hours' sleep.

24th.—At 3h. 30m. A.M. cast off; at 5h. passed Ghäim, the wind heading us. At 7h. 45m. made fast to an island on the right bank, as the water was too rough. I feel much better. At 10h. the wind lulled and we went on. At 10h. 30m. passing Khán Mizrákjí. At 11h. 10m. the weather became squally, so made fast. At 4 P.M. again loosened and went on, E. by S.; the river full of islands. This is the place where the natives say the steamer could not stem the current; but I feel confident she could do it easily: 6h. 15m. opposite Khán Tholeyyah. At the Minthar, and below it at Sayyed Mohammed, the right bank has been cut away, and shows many sepulchral vases and bricks: lower down the river for some distance flows N.E. and even N., then sweeps round to its proper direction. At 11h. 15m. P.M. were again obliged to make fast, having a strong breeze from S.E.

25th.—Wind still S.E., but lighter; so at 4 A.M. we went on. At 5h. 15m. stopped to blow up the skins till 5h. 45m., then went on again. At 9h. 40m. got to Sindiyah, and went alongside the *Euphrates* steamer. Here finding Mr. Hector, who was this evening to proceed to Baghdád in a covered boat, I resolved to go with him, and sent the kelek on, which did not arrive till five hours after us.

At 6h. 30m. P.M. left the steamer in the boat, and rowed down the river, and at the same hour on the following morning arrived at Baghdád.

### *Description of Al Hadr.*

The ruins of Al Hadr occupy a space of ground upwards of a mile in diameter, enclosed by a circular, or nearly circular wall, of immense thickness, with square bastions or towers at about every 60 paces, built of large square cut stones. The upper portions of the curtains have in most places been thrown down, as have been also some of the bastions, but most of the latter may still be said to be in very fair preservation, each having towards the city vaulted chambers. Outside the wall is a broad and very deep ditch, now dry, and 100 or 150 paces beyond it is a thick rampart, now only a few feet high, going round the town (*see Plan*); and at some distance beyond the fortifications stand two

high mounds with square towers upon them, one on the eastern side, the other on the north.

In nearly the exact centre of the town stands the grand object of curiosity, whether temple or palace, I shall not pretend to say, enclosed by a strong, thick, square wall (partly demolished), with bastions similar to those of the city wall, fronting the four cardinal points, each face measuring 300 long paces inside. The square is in its centre intersected from north to south by a range of buildings greatly damaged, a confused mass of chambers, gateways, and one built pillar reduced to about 30 feet. Between this range and the eastern wall appears to have been a clear space. The principal buildings occupy the western side, and consist of a huge pile fronting the east, and part of a wing fronting the north. The ground-story only remains perfect, and consists of a range of vaulted halls of two sizes.

Beginning at the southern end of the large pile is, first,—

No. 1. One of the smaller halls, in a perfect state, having at its lower end a square doorway, the top of one stone finely carved, leading into a similar apartment which receives no other light. Externally, every stone in the spring of the arch has cut upon it in high relief a human bust, some with very curious curling bag-wigs, but all are more or less defaced from long exposure to the weather. The height of the hall is, I should think, about 30 feet.

No. 2. A large vaulted hall, 32 long paces in depth and 12 in breadth; the roof has fallen in from end to end, but I think when perfect, it must have been 60 feet high. The few stones remaining of the spring show outside on each the figure of an angel or female, apparently in the air, with feet crossed and robes flying loose; underneath the spring is still visible some beautifully sculptured foliage. In each side of this hall are three square pilasters, and in each of these, near the crown, have been three full round faces in very high relief and executed with great spirit and boldness; twelve of them are still in their places, and one much mutilated, lying on the ground, measured 2 feet from the tip of the chin to the top of the forehead. They have much the appearance of Greek or Roman execution: one is a young and apparently female face with wings on the temples; another has a wild look, with the hair loose; another has a serpent hanging from each temple; some are male heads with a fine placid expression, and one is the face of an old man with large mustachios and a beard separated into twists like so many pieces of rope; this latter the Arabs call *Kúzí*. Many of them have a binding round the head like a double fold of rope; and a hole cut into each eyeball gives them almost the look of life. Along each side of this hall is carved in high relief a fine cornice of round balls sunk into ornamental work; these from the ground seem about the size of

twelve-pound cannon-balls. The tops of the pilasters reach above the cornice, and are crowned with sculpture similar to it. From the back of this hall a square doorway leads to the passage round No. 8; an arched doorway close to it has been built up, and near each back corner is a doorway leading to a subterraneous room on either side. I descended into one, but from want of light could only make out that, like all above, it was vaulted,

Nos. 3 & 4. Exactly like No. 1, but having no openings behind. From the wall dividing them a low ruined wall, only a few feet high, runs to the gateway at No. 11, seemingly the remains of a central division.

No. 5. A large hall, roof fallen in; busts on the few remaining stones of the spring, three pilasters in each side, in each of which have been two faces, but most of them have fallen down. The upper part of the northern side having fallen, gives a section of the upper stories; small square rooms over No. 6, devoid of sculpture, but now much destroyed. I think there must have been a door from this hall to an apartment which must exist behind Nos. 3 and 4, but the whole is now so choked up with fallen rubbish, that I could not make it out. On the wall outside, between this and No. 4, is a finely-sculptured figure of a griffin, with twisted tail, about 5 feet from the ground.

No. 6. Similar to Nos. 1, 3, and 4.

No. 7. A large hall, the whole roof and almost all the northern side fallen down. On the southern side of it, about 10 feet from the ground, is a line of eight monsters, bulls with human heads, the relief reaching to the shoulders; they are full-faced and about the size of life, a cornice over them. From the bottom of this hall a door leads to an oblong square chamber, devoid of sculpture.

No. 8. A square room, roof fallen in, having a vaulted passage all round, 2 paces broad and 22 paces on each side; this passage has two entrances, one from outside, west, and the other from hall No. 2; it has also two square holes or windows high up, one at each inner corner, being, as far as my observation went, the only approaches to windows in the whole ruins. The square room itself was entered by a door nearly opposite the back one of hall No. 2, but it is now filled up by stones; the upper part of the door is formed of one stone bearing a very exquisite relief of busts, birds, griffins, &c.

No. 9. A vaulted chamber.

No. 10. Two arched halls, roofs fallen in, busts on the springs.

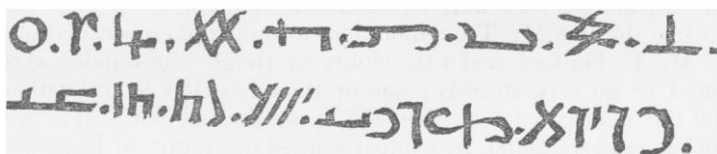
No. 11. A confused mass of broken chambers, gates, and part of the shaft of a pillar.

As nearly as I could guess, the number of stones in each spring amounted to thirty; the outsides of the arches are square

pilasters, and between several of them are round pilasters. Between the cross range and the great pile the ground has been paved with large square stones, and the work is still in many places perfect. In this space are also still seen many deep, bell-shaped wells or reservoirs, having narrow mouths, but of vast diameter at the bottom, built of well-cut and closely-fitted stones.

The southern end of the great pile shows a stair leading in one line from the ground to the top: this pile most probably extended the whole diameter of the square. The dwelling-houses appear to have been confined entirely to the western part of the city; they are now merely long mounds and hillocks; but with a little close examination I am certain the direction of every street and square could be ascertained. Eastward of the central square a canal or ditch crosses the city, and between it and the city wall, in the same direction, are numbers of detached square buildings of a most dreary aspect, evidently the Necropolis: these are of different sizes, from 20 to 40 feet square, and about as many in height, some having two chambers, others only one; some have pilasters outside, others are plain.

The whole city is built of a brownish-grey limestone, so closely fitted that if cement has been used, it cannot be seen, and almost every stone in the great pile has cut upon it one or more letters or marks, seemingly the builders' number, as they are seen in the midst of broken walls, where they could not have been exposed when the structure was perfect. They are best seen in the square passage round No. 8: most stones have but one cipher, while many have two, three, and even five, thus—



During both visits to these ruins I endeavoured, by looking into every hole and corner, to discover the statues said by the Arabs to be there, but could find none. The last time, I brought from the camp a Bedwin who was to point out the statue of the woman milking the cow, so much spoken of by them, but he took me direct to one of the monsters in No. 7. I now much doubt the existence of any statue at all, at least above ground.